

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 FRANKF 02627 051559Z

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 /041 W

-----051944Z 068907 /42

R 051516Z APR 77

FM AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7712

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE FRANKFURT 2627

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, ET

SUBJ: PRINCE ASSERATE-APPEAL TO PRESIDENT CARTER

1. PRINCE ASSERATE, THE SON OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE
LAST IMPERIAL CROWN COUNCIL IN ETHIOPIA, CALLED ON CONSUL GENERAL
ON APRIL 4 WITH REQUEST THAT THE FOLLOWING LETTER TO
PRESIDENT CARTER BE FORWARDED BY THE CONSULATE GENERAL
TO THE WHITE HOUSE. BEGIN TEXT: DEAR MR. PRESIDENT,
YOUR MANIFEST INTEREST IN HUMAN RIGHTS PROMPTS ME TO
WRITE TO YOU ON BEHALF OF THE MANY POLITICAL
PRISONERS IN ETHIOPIA.

WHILE THOUSANDS OF PRISONERS OF ALL AGES AND FROM ALL
WALKS OF LIFE ARE STILL LEFT LANGUISHING IN DETENTION
CAMPS AND PRISON CELLS WITHOUT BEING CHARGED OR
BROUGHT TO TRIAL FOR ALMOST THREE YEARS, ARBITRARY
AND INDISCRIMINATE MASS ARREST OF MEN, WOMEN, AND
CHILDREN HAS INTENSIFIED TO A TERRIFYING
DEGREE, ESPECIALLY IN THE LAST FOUR WEEKS.

I AM A FOUNDER MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL FOR CIVIL
LIBERTIES IN ETHIOPIA (C.C.L.E.), AN ORGANIZATION
ESTABLISHED TO STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE AND FUNDAMENTAL
LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 FRANKF 02627 051559Z

HUMAN RIGHTS IN ETHIOPIA. FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS
WE HAVE TRIED WITHOUT AVAIL, TO EXERT A MORAL
PRESSURE ON THE DERG (THE GOVERNING MILITARY COUNCIL)
TO STOP THE CONTINUED VIOLATIONS OF CIVIL LIBERTIES
AND ACTS OF GENOCIDE IN OUR COUNTRY. WE HAVE ALSO
SOUGHT TO SECURE THE RELEASE OF THE WOMEN AND
CHILDREN, WHO PLAYED NO ROLE WHATSOEVER IN THE COUNTRY'S

POLITICAL LIFE.

FOURTEEN MEMBERS OF MY OWN FAMILY (WOMEN AND CHILDREN RANGING IN AGE FROM 15 TO 76) WHO HAVE BEEN DETAINED FOR THE PAST THREE YEARS IN CONSIDERABLE PRIVATION ARE PROBABLY SUFFERING MORE THAN MOST NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE CAPABLE OF OFFERING EFFECTIVE POLITICAL OPPOSITION TO THE PRESENT REGIME, BUT SOLELY BECAUSE THEY ARE RELATED TO THE FORMER EMPEROR. THE PLIGHT OF THESE INNOCENT PEOPLE IS ACUTE AS THE PHOTOSTAT CUTTING FROM THE LONDON FINANCIAL TIMES CLEARLY DEMONSTRATES.

WHILE THEIR LIVES ARE AT RISK FROM MALTREATMENT AND NEGLECT AS A RESULT OF THE CONDITIONS OF THEIR IMPRISONMENT, AN EXTRA DIMENSION IS ADDED TO THEIR PERIL OWING TO THE POLITICAL INSTABILITY OF THE MILITARY JUNTA. WE FEAR THAT A CHANGE IN THE POLITICAL BALANCE COULD PROVOKE A MASSACRE EVEN WORSE THAN THAT OF NOVEMBER 1974, IN WHICH MY FATHER, PRINCE ASSERATE KASSA (THE LAST PRESIDENT OF THE IMPERIAL CROWN COUNCIL AND A MAN WHO FOR YEARS HAD TRIED TO INTRODUCE DEMOCRACY TO ETHIOPIA) WAS SHOT WITHOUT TRIAL TOGETHER WITH 59 OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS. THE SITUATION, AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE AND, NO DOUBT FROM YOUR OWN INTELLIGENCE, IS DESPERATE. THERE IS NOTHING MORE THAT WE EXILES CAN DO. THEREFORE, MR. PRESIDENT, WE ARE PINNING OUR HOPES ON YOUR CONCERN FOR THE WORLD'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 FRANKF 02627 051559Z

OPPROSSED AND ON YOUR CLEAR DETERMINATION TO STAY TRUE TO YOUR CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES.

WE KNOW THAT, AS A RESULT OF THIS CONCERN, AID TO ETHIOPIA HAS BEEN DRASTICALLY REDUCED. BUT WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF YOU WOULD VOICE YOUR CONCERN FOR OUR PEOPLE AS STRONGLY AS YOU HAVE SHOWN YOUR SUPPORT FOR DISSIDENT IN EASTERN EUROPE. THE POSITION OF THE ETHIOPIAN POLITICAL PRISONERS IS EVEN MORE DANGEROUS THAN THOSE IN THE SOVIET UNION. OPPRESSIVE AS SOVIETS LAW MAY BE, IT IS STILL A COUNTRY RULED BY THE FORCES OF LAW. IN ETHIOPIA, THERE IS NO LAW AND NO CONSTITUTION, MERELY RULE BY EDICT, WHIM AND TERROR.

YOUR HELP IS VITAL AS, IN THE FEW MONTHS YOU HAVE BEEN IN OFFICE, YOU HAVE ADDED A NEW MORALITY TO THE WORLD OF "REALPOLITIK." IF YOU ADD YOUR WEIGHT TO THE PROTESTS, OTHER GOVERNMENTS IN THE

FREE WORLD WILL FOLLOW YOUR LEAD. THE ETHIOPIAN
MILITARY JUNTA WILL FIND SUCH PRESSURE HARD TO
RESIST.

I DO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS LITTLE POLITICAL
ADVANTAGE TO BE GAINED FROM HELPING THE VICTIMS OF
ETHIOPIAN FASCISM. THEY ARE PEOPLE WHO HOLD
LITTLE WEIGHT IN THE WORLD OF SUPER-POWER DIPLOMACY,
BUT THIS APPROACH IS MADE IN THE FIRM BELIEF THAT
YOU, SIR, ARE A PRESIDENT WHO HOLDS MORAL VALUES
ABOVE THOSE OF POLITICAL EXPENDIENCY.

PLEASE ACCEPT, MR. PRESIDENT, THE ASSURANCES OF MY
HIGHEST ESTEEM. YOURS SINCERELY, SIGNED PRINCE
ASFA-WOSSEN ASSERATE, FOUNDER MEMBER, COUNCIL FOR
CIVIL LIBERTIES IN ETHIOPIA. END TEXT.

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 FRANKF 02627 051559Z

2. PRINCE ASSERATE WHO LIVES IN FRANKFURT HAS
PREVIOUSLY WRITTEN TO FORMER SECRETARY KISSINGER AND
RECEIVED A RESPONSE FROM FORMER DIRECTOR, AF/E
WENDELL COOTE BY LETTER DATED MARCH 11, 1975.

3. ASSERATE IN DELIVERING LATEST LETTER TO THE
PRESIDENT ALSO SAID THAT UP TO NOW HE HAD DELIBERATELY
REFRAINED FROM PUBLICIZING APPEALS SUCH AS IN LETTER
IN PARA ONE ABOVE ON THE THEORY THAT PUBLICITY MIGHT
HARM RATHER THAN HELP HIS MOTHER AND MANY OTHERS
IMPRISONED IN ETHIOPIA. HE HAD NOW, HOWEVER, COME
TO THE CONCLUSION THAT PUBLIC PRESSURE MIGHT BE MORE
USEFUL. WHILE HE HAS NOT NOW RELEASED THE LETTER TO
PRESIDENT CARTER TO THE PRESS HE MIGHT DO SO LATER
IN LIGHT OF ANY REPLY WHICH HE MAY RECEIVE.

4. ORIGINAL OF LETTER AND COPY OF ENCLOSED PRESS
CLIPPING BEING POUCHED TO AF/E. LEHMANN

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HUMAN RIGHTS, TEXT, POLITICAL STABILITY, POLITICAL PRISONERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 05-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977FRANKF02627
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770118-0793
Format: TEL
From: FRANKFURT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770488/aaaacymb.tel
Line Count: 157
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: de26efa9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2896997
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRINCE ASSERATE-APPEAL TO PRESIDENT CARTER
TAGS: SHUM, ET, US, (CARTER, JIMMY), (ASSERATE, ASFA-WOSSEN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/de26efa9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009